



U.S. Department of Justice

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## **PRESS RELEASE**

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### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Former Church Treasurer Pleads Guilty to Interstate Transportation of Stolen Monies**

**Washington, D.C.** - Michael W. Tibbs, 32, the former Treasurer of the Greater St. Paul Baptist Church in the District of Columbia, has pled guilty to a one count Information charging him with Interstate Transportation of Stolen Monies, U.S. Attorney Ronald C. Machen Jr. announced today. Tibbs, of Glen Burnie, Maryland, pled guilty yesterday in the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia before the Honorable Richard J. Leon. At sentencing, Tibbs faces a statutory maximum term of ten years in prison on the charge, although his prison sentence under the advisory Sentencing Guidelines is expected to be in the range of 12-18 months. As part of the plea agreement, Tibbs agreed to pay restitution in the amount of \$107,445.53 to the Greater St. Paul Baptist Church. Sentencing in the matter is scheduled for Tuesday, June 15, 2010, before Judge Leon.

In connection with the guilty plea and as set forth in the executed Statement of Offense, Tibbs acknowledged that from November 2003 through November 1, 2006, he was the Treasurer of the Greater St. Paul Baptist Church, located in the District of Columbia at 5720 South Dakota Avenue, NE. Following his election to Treasurer in or about November 2003, Tibbs changed the mailing address on the Church's Bank of America bank statements to the address of one of his close family members. Thereafter, Tibbs admitted that he stole approximately \$107,445.83 by writing checks and using the debit card issued on the Church's Bank of America checking account to pay for personal expenses. On some of the unauthorized checks, Tibbs hand wrote notations on the memo lines of the checks falsely referencing the purported reason for the payments, such as "repairs" and "funeral." Tibbs also admitted that he used a debit card issued on one of the Church's accounts to pay for approximately \$10,794.04 in personal expenses for his personal telephone bills and his wedding reception, specifically for his wedding cake, reception hall rental, videographer and deejay.

Tibbs further admitted that he took several steps to conceal his theft from the Church. In particular, Tibbs presented financial reports to the Church that materially overstated the quarterly balances of the Church's bank accounts, and misrepresented in financial reports the names of payees on checks he had made payable to himself, falsely attributing them to Church

expenditures such as copy services, tax payments and “Bible school.” Tibbs further acknowledged that he provided the Church a phony “Tax Audit” from a fictitious accounting firm that materially overstated the balances in the Church’s bank accounts. The Church discovered the theft in late October 2006, removed Tibbs from his position as Treasurer, and referred the matter to law enforcement.

In announcing the guilty plea, U.S. Attorney Machen praised the investigative efforts of detectives from the Metropolitan Police Department. He also recognized the efforts of former U.S. Attorney’s Office Criminal Investigator Diane Eickman and Paralegal Specialist Sarah Reis, and commended the efforts of Assistant U.S. Attorney Michael K. Atkinson who is prosecuting the case.

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